

Information Booklet

Exit Level English Language Arts Revised

Texas Education Agency • Student Assessment Division

INTRODUCTION

The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) is a completely reconceived testing program. It assesses more of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) than the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) did and asks questions in more authentic ways. TAKS has been developed to better reflect good instructional practice and more accurately measure student learning. We hope that every teacher will see the connection between what we test on this new state assessment and what our students should know and be able to do to be academically successful. To provide you with a better understanding of TAKS and its connection to the TEKS and to classroom teaching, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has developed this newly revised edition of the TAKS information booklet. The information booklets were originally published in January 2002, before the first TAKS field test. Now, after several years of field tests and live administrations, we are able to provide an even more comprehensive picture of the testing program. We have clarified some of the existing material and, in some cases, provided new sample items and/or more explanations of certain item types. However, it is important to remember that these clarifications do not signify any change in the TAKS testing program. The objectives and TEKS student expectations assessed on TAKS remain unchanged. We hope this revised version of the TAKS information booklet will serve as a user-friendly resource to help you understand that the best preparation for TAKS is a coherent, TEKS-based instructional program that provides the level of support necessary for all students to reach their academic potential.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The development of the TAKS program included extensive public scrutiny and input from Texas teachers, administrators, parents, members of the business community, professional education organizations, faculty and staff at Texas colleges and universities, and national content-area experts. The agency involved as many stakeholders as possible because we believed that the development of TAKS was a responsibility that had to be shared if this new assessment was to be an equitable and accurate measure of learning for all Texas public school students.

The three-year test-development process, which began in summer 1999, included a series of carefully conceived activities. First, committees of Texas educators identified those TEKS student expectations for each grade and subject area assessed that should be tested on a statewide assessment. Then a committee of TEA Student Assessment and Curriculum staff incorporated these selected TEKS student expectations, along with draft objectives for each subject area, into eleventh grade exit level surveys. These surveys were sent to Texas educators at the middle school and secondary levels for their review. Based on input we received from more than 27,000 survey responses, we developed a second draft of the objectives and TEKS student expectations. In addition, we used this input during the development of draft objectives and student expectations for grades 3 through 10 to ensure that the TAKS program, like the TEKS curriculum, would be vertically aligned. This vertical alignment was a critical step in ensuring that the TAKS tests would become more rigorous as students moved from grade to grade. For example, the fifth grade tests would be more rigorous than the fourth grade tests, which would be more rigorous than the third grade tests. Texas educators felt that this increase in rigor from grade to grade was both appropriate and logical since each subject-area test was closely aligned to the TEKS curriculum at that grade level.

In fall 2000 TEA distributed the second draft of the objectives and TEKS student expectations for eleventh grade exit level and the first draft of the objectives and student expectations for grades 3 through 10 for review at the campus level. These documents were also posted on the Student Assessment Division's website to encourage input from the public. Each draft document focused on two central issues: first, whether the objectives included in the draft were essential to measure on a statewide assessment; and, second, whether students would have received enough instruction on the TEKS student expectations included under each objective to be adequately prepared to demonstrate mastery of that objective in the spring of the school year. We received more than 57,000 campus-consensus survey responses. We used these responses, along with feedback from national experts, to finalize the TAKS objectives and student expectations. Because the state assessment was necessarily limited to a "snapshot" of student performance, broad-based input was important to ensure that TAKS assessed the parts of the TEKS curriculum most critical to students' academic learning and progress.

In the thorough test-development process that we use for the TAKS program, we rely on educator input to develop items that are appropriate and valid measures of the objectives and TEKS student expectations the items are designed to assess. This input includes an annual educator review and revision of all proposed test items before field-testing and a second annual educator review of data and items after field-testing. In addition, each year panels of recognized experts in the fields of English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies meet in Austin to critically review the content of each of the high school level TAKS assessments to be administered that year. This critical review is referred to as a content validation review and is one of the final activities in a series of quality-control steps designed to ensure that each high school test is of the highest quality possible. A content validation review is considered necessary at the high school grades (9, 10, and 11) because of the advanced level of content being assessed.

ORGANIZATION OF THE TAKS TESTS

TAKS is divided into test objectives. It is important to remember that the objective statements are not found in the TEKS curriculum. Rather, the objectives are "umbrella statements" that serve as headings under which student expectations from the TEKS can be meaningfully grouped. Objectives are broad statements that "break up" knowledge and skills to be tested into meaningful subsets around which a test can be organized into reporting units. These reporting units help campuses, districts, parents, and the general public understand the performance of our students and schools. Test objectives are not intended to be "translations" or "rewordings" of the TEKS. Instead, the objectives are designed to be identical across grade levels rather than grade specific. Generally, the objectives are the same for third grade through eighth grade (an elementary/middle school system) and for ninth grade through eleventh grade (a high school system). In addition, certain TEKS student expectations may logically be grouped under more than one test objective; however, it is important for you to understand that this is not meaningless repetition—sometimes the organization of the objectives requires such groupings. For example, on the TAKS writing tests for fourth and seventh grades, some of the same student expectations addressing the conventions of standard English usage are listed under both Objective 2 and Objective 6. In this case, the expectations listed under Objective 2 are assessed through the overall strength of a student's use of language conventions on the written composition portion of the test; these same expectations under Objective 6 are assessed through multiple-choice items attached to a series of revising and editing passages.

ORGANIZATION OF THE INFORMATION BOOKLETS

The purpose of the information booklets is to help Texas educators, students, parents, and other stakeholders understand more about the TAKS tests. These booklets are not intended to replace the teaching of the TEKS curriculum, provide the basis for the isolated teaching of skills in the form of narrow test preparation, or serve as the single information source about every aspect of the TAKS program. However, we believe that the booklets provide helpful explanations as well as show enough sample items, reading and writing selections, and prompts to give educators a good sense of the assessment.

Each grade within a subject area is presented as a separate booklet. However, it is still important that teachers review the information booklets for the grades both above and below the grade they teach. For example, eighth grade mathematics teachers who review the seventh grade information booklet as well as the ninth grade information booklet are able to develop a broader perspective of the mathematics assessment than if they study only the eighth grade information booklet.

The information booklets for each subject area contain some information unique to that subject. For example, the mathematics chart that students use on TAKS is included for each grade at which mathematics is assessed. However, all booklets include the following information, which we consider critical for every subject-area TAKS test:

- an overview of the subject within the context of TAKS
- a blueprint of the test—the number of items under each objective and the number of items on the test as a whole
- information that clarifies how to read the TEKS
- the reasons each objective and its TEKS student expectations are critical to student learning and success
- the objectives and TEKS student expectations that are included on TAKS
- additional information about each objective that helps educators understand how it is assessed on TAKS
- sample items that show some of the ways objectives are assessed

Introduction to TAKS English Language Arts (ELA) at Exit Level

The ability to read effectively is essential for all students. As students move from grade to grade, reading skills are critical for academic progress. Students who cannot read well will struggle to succeed not only in English language arts but in social studies, science, and mathematics as well. At the high school level, students use their already established reading skills to explore literary and expository texts with a greater depth of understanding. Students analyze how literary elements and techniques contribute to a text's meaning and how an author crafts a piece of writing to affect the way the reader reads and understands it. As students learn to analyze various types of texts and learn to make connections between what they read and what they already know, their powers of comprehension and critical thinking expand. It is no accident that good readers become good thinkers and have more opportunities available to them throughout their lives—in education, employment, and personal enrichment—than those who have not learned this fundamental skill.

Writing skills are also critical for academic success. Students who have learned to communicate well on paper have an advantage both in school and in the workplace. Because good writing requires good thinking, the act of writing actually helps students learn to clarify their thoughts and focus their ideas. In addition, students who write well are usually strong readers. Why? In very simple terms, a writer must be able to read what he or she has written and recognize whether the words mean what the writer wants them to mean. Therefore, every time a student is writing effectively, that student is also reading carefully and thoughtfully. In this way, writing and reading reinforce each other. The exit level English language arts test is an integrated reading and writing test, reflecting this close connection between the two skills.

For students to be successful readers and writers, reading and writing instruction must occur at *every* grade level, not merely at the tested grades. The TEKS were organized to ensure that at each grade level students acquire the reading and writing skills they will need for success in the next grade. That is, these skills are addressed in a systematic, "building block" manner from grade to grade. Because of this careful alignment, students' abilities are strengthened as they progress through elementary school, middle school, and high school. Students are continually expected to read in all their classes, but sometimes writing opportunities are limited in classes other than English. Making writing a routine part of other content areas, such as science and social studies, will strengthen students' proficiency by providing many opportunities to practice writing. Without practice, students cannot internalize the skills they need to become confident and competent writers. Students' writing skills can be strengthened in many ways: by keeping a journal or portfolio, by writing in response to reading or in response to a movie or other viewing experience, by writing the procedures for and results of a science experiment, by writing an essay for history or art class, etc. Valuable writing experiences do not have to be, and should not always be, prompt-driven.

Reading Objectives

The exit level ELA TAKS objectives for reading are listed below.

- Objective 1: The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of culturally diverse written texts.
- Objective 2: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the effects of literary elements and techniques in culturally diverse written texts.
- Objective 3: The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze and critically evaluate culturally diverse written texts and visual representations.

Objectives 1, 2, and 3 are assessed through multiple-choice items based on a set of three pieces, called a "triplet," presented for the student to read. (See the section on page 6 titled "What Is a Triplet?" for details.) In addition, Objectives 2 and 3 are assessed through three open-ended (short-answer) items. Each open-ended item is equivalent to three multiple-choice items.

Writing Objectives

The exit level ELA TAKS objectives for writing are listed below.

- Objective 4: The student will, within a given context, produce an effective composition for a specific purpose.
- Objective 5: The student will produce a piece of writing that demonstrates a command of the conventions of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure.
- Objective 6: The student will demonstrate the ability to revise and proofread to improve the clarity and effectiveness of a piece of writing.

Objectives 4 and 5 are assessed through a composition that the student writes in response to a prompt. The prompt is thematically linked to the triplet. Objective 6 tests revising and editing skills in a peerediting context. In this booklet each TAKS objective appears with its related TEKS student expectations that are eligible for testing. It is critical to remember, however, that there are a number of TEKS student expectations that are not listed here. Even though only a portion of the TEKS ELA curriculum has been identified as eligible for statewide testing, *all* the curriculum must be taught to ensure that students receive a solid, complete program of instruction.

General Guidelines for TAKS ELA at Exit Level

What Is a Triplet?

The exit level ELA test is based on a thematically linked set of pieces for the student to read and analyze. The term *triplet* is used to describe this set of three pieces. The components of a triplet are as follows:

- a published literary selection
- a published expository (informational) selection
- a one-page viewing and representing piece

Both the literary and expository (informational) selections will be published works or excerpts from published works. The selections must not appear in any of the state-adopted high school English textbooks. At exit level the combined length of a triplet is approximately 3,000–3,500 words, and the paragraphs of the literary and expository selections are numbered for easy reference. The readability of the selections are appropriate for eleventh grade students, and the selections overall reflect cultural diversity. The term *culturally diverse* simply means "pertaining to a variety of backgrounds and perspectives." We are committed to finding selections that represent, as much as possible, the wide range of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences of Texas students. At the same time, each selection must be accessible to *all* students, regardless of ethnicity or background.

Viewing and representing pieces are one-page pieces with minimal text. These visual representations focus on media literacy; they may include, but are not limited to, a created advertisement, a created or published cartoon, a page from a created website, a photograph, or a chart or other graphic piece.

The components of each triplet are thematically linked; that is, there is a strong connection across the three pieces in terms of a common theme or idea. In this way, students are not reading random selections that would require them to "shift gears" between each piece. The triplet concept not only provides a rich built-in context for the reader as he or she moves from piece to piece but also forms the basis of a focused and unified test.

Reading: Multiple-Choice Items

- A multiple-choice item may be based on one of the selections or the viewing and representing piece; in addition, an item may address both the literary and expository selections. Items based on the literary and expository selections assess Objectives 1, 2, or 3; items based on the viewing and representing piece assess Objective 3 only.
- Items reflect authentic questioning; that is, they reflect the ways that teachers naturally and routinely ask questions during instruction.
- Item stems include specific paragraph and/or text references when appropriate. A paragraph and/or text reference is necessary if it would be too time-consuming for students to find the relevant section of text in order to answer the question.

Reading: Open-Ended Items

- Open-ended items (also called short answer items) require students to write a brief response. Open-ended items are based on the literary or expository selections only; no open-ended items address the viewing and representing piece. These items assess Objectives 2 and 3 only and may be based on either an individual selection or both selections.
- For open-ended items that address one selection, students have five lines to respond on the answer document. However, for items that ask students to make a connection between the literary and expository selections, students have eight lines to respond.
- All open-ended items require students to generate clear, reasonable ideas about various aspects of a text and to support these ideas with relevant evidence from the text. Text evidence may take the form of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis. Although students may use a paragraph citation to indicate where in the text they have taken their evidence, they may not use a citation by itself (for example, see paragraphs 6–8). The best text evidence clearly supports the validity of the student's ideas or analysis.
- Students' responses to open-ended items are scored based on content; writing conventions
 are not taken into consideration unless the frequency and/or severity of errors causes clarity
 problems.
- Possible scores for open-ended responses are 0 (insufficient), 1 (partially sufficient), 2 (sufficient), and 3 (exemplary).
- Each open-ended item—the literary item, the expository item, and the "crossover" item—is based on a separate reading rubric. These three rubrics appear on pages 33–45.

Written Composition

- The prompt allows each student to use the approach that best expresses his or her ideas about the topic. Students are free to address the prompt as they choose as long as the finished product is a composition in standard English prose. (Note: Poetry is not an acceptable form of response.) Students' ability to use their own experience, perspective, and knowledge of the world helps them to effectively express their ideas.
- The prompt is thematically linked to the triplet. In this way, students have a built-in context that they can draw on as they plan their compositions. Note, however, that while students may choose to specifically analyze or refer to a part or parts of the triplet in the composition, students are **not** required to address the triplet.
- The composition is evaluated using a focused, holistic scoring system, which is based on a scale from 1 to 4. Compositions are scored for both rhetorical effectiveness (Objective 4) and the conventions of standard written English (Objective 5). Scorers use a rubric, or set of specific criteria at each score point, to identify characteristics of the composition. At the same time, readers evaluate the student's writing as a whole, taking into account the limitations imposed by the testing situation.
- The written composition rubric appears on pages 50–53.

Revising and Editing: Multiple-Choice Items

- These items assess Objective 6. Students read passages designed to resemble student writing. Multiple-choice questions about these passages require students to indicate how a particular sentence might be corrected or improved or how the organization or development of a paragraph might be improved. This task parallels what students frequently do in class when they read one another's writing to check for problems with organization, sentence boundaries, word choice, usage, punctuation, spelling, etc. Such peer-editing activities are a central part of an effective processed-based classroom.
- Sentences within each passage are numbered so that students can easily find the sentence they need to work with as they are answering an item.
- Passages are written to be appropriate for eleventh graders with regard to subject matter, vocabulary, and interest level. In recognition of the wide range of students' backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences, the passages represent cultural diversity as much as possible.
- As students learn the writing process, they become familiar with common terminology. Some of this terminology is routinely used in the wording of the revising and editing items. Students should be able to read and understand such terms as *revise* (or *revising* or *revision*), *edit*, *peer editing*, *organization*, *transition*, *improve*, *combine*, *delete*, *add*, and *insert*.

Dictionary/Thesaurus Use

- The use of an English language dictionary and thesaurus is permitted throughout the reading and composition portions of the test but **not** on the revising and editing portion of the test. While students are working through the reading section and writing their compositions, they must have access to an English language dictionary and thesaurus or an English language dictionary/thesaurus combination. The school may provide these, or students may bring copies from home. Any dictionary may be provided, but current dictionaries have features such as synonyms, idiomatic expressions (especially helpful to English language learners), geographical names, biographical names, etc. Districts may want to gradually update their dictionaries as budgets permit. The minimum schools need is one dictionary/thesaurus for every five students testing, but the state's recommendation is one for every three students or, optimally, one for each student.
- The exit level ELA test booklet has two seals. The first sealed section contains the reading selections, the reading items (both multiple choice and short answer), and the written composition prompt; the second sealed section contains the revising and editing passages and items. Students must complete the reading and composition sections of the test before they begin the revising and editing section. Once a student has finished the reading and composition sections and before he or she breaks the seal on the revising and editing section, he or she must give up all access to a dictionary/thesaurus.
- After finishing the revising and editing section, a student may go back to review reading items or revise his or her composition, but this review MUST be done without the use of any reference materials.

Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)

Blueprint for Exit Level English Language Arts

TAKS Objectives	Number of Items
Objective 1: Basic Understanding (Reading)	8 multiple-choice items
Objective 2: Literary Elements and Techniques (Reading)	8 multiple-choice items 1 open-ended item*
Objective 3: Analysis and Critical Evaluation (Reading)	12 multiple-choice items 2 open-ended items*
Objective 4 (Composition) Objective 5 (Composition)	1 writing prompt
Objective 6: Revising and Editing (Writing)	20 multiple-choice items
Total number of items	1 writing prompt 3 open-ended reading items 48 multiple-choice items

^{*}One open-ended item assesses the literary selection (Objective 2), one assesses the expository selection (Objective 3), and one connects the two selections (Objective 3). Each open-ended item is equivalent to 3 multiple-choice items.

A Key to Understanding the TEKS Included on TAKS Exit Level English Language Arts

Example from Objective 1

__A

- (6) **Reading/word identification/vocabulary development.** The student acquires an extensive vocabulary through reading and systematic word study. The student is expected to
- **B** (B) rely on context to determine meanings of words and phrases such as figurative language, connotation and denotation of words, analogies, [idioms,] and technical vocabulary.



KEY

A. Knowledge and Skills Statement

This broad statement describes what students should know and be able to do for exit level English language arts. The number preceding the statement is the number of the knowledge and skills statement as it appears in the TEKS for English III.

B. Student Expectation

This specific statement describes what students should be able to do to demonstrate proficiency in what is described in the knowledge and skills statement. Students are tested on skills outlined in the student expectation statement.

C. [bracketed text]

Although the entire student expectation has been provided for reference, text in brackets indicates that this portion of the student expectation is not tested on TAKS.

NOTE: The full TEKS curriculum can be found at www.tea.state.tx.us/teks/.

TEKS STUDENT EXPECTATIONS—IMPORTANT VOCABULARY

For every subject area and grade level, two terms—such as and including—are used to help make the TEKS student expectations more concrete for teachers. However, these terms function in different ways. To help you understand the effect each of the terms has on specific student expectations, we are providing the following:

- a short definition of each term
- an example from a specific student expectation for this subject area
- a short explanation of how this term affects this student expectation

Such as

The term *such as* is used when the specific examples that follow it function only as representative illustrations that help define the expectation for teachers. These examples are just that—examples. Teachers may choose to use them when teaching the student expectation, but there is no requirement to use them. Other examples can be used in addition to those listed or as replacements for those listed.

The English III TEKS (19) (C) states that the student is expected to distinguish the purposes of various media forms such as informative texts, entertaining texts, and advertisements.

Students learn to evaluate various purposes by examining different forms of media; the examples following *such as* are forms of media that may be used for this kind of analysis. However, this list is not exhaustive or exclusive. Teachers may use these forms of media or others to teach students to distinguish the purposes of various media forms.

Including

The term *including* is used when the specific examples that follow it must be taught. However, other examples may also be used in conjunction with those listed.

The English III TEKS (12) (A) states that the student is expected to analyze the characteristics of clearly written texts, including the patterns of organization, syntax, and word choice.

The terms following *including* are examples of critical characteristics of text that a student needs to master. These characteristics must be taught; however, teachers are not limited to teaching only these characteristics.

Remember

- Any example preceded by the term *such as* in a particular student expectation may or may not provide the basis for an item assessing that expectation. Because these examples do not necessarily have to be used to teach the student expectation, it is equally likely that other examples may be used in assessment items. The rule here is that an example be used only if it is central to the knowledge, concept, or skill the item assesses.
- It is more likely that some of the examples preceded by the term *including* in a particular student expectation will provide the basis for items assessing that expectation, since these examples must be taught. However, it is important to remember that the examples that follow the term *including* do not represent all the examples possible, so other examples may also provide the basis for an assessment item. As above, the rule here is that an example be used only if it is central to the knowledge, concept, or skill the item assesses.

TAKS Exit Level English Language Arts—Objective 1

Before students can form their own ideas about a text, they must be able to understand its basic meaning. To develop an initial understanding of what they read, students must be able to do four things: (1) use context and other word-identification strategies to help them understand the meaning of the words they read, (2) recognize important supporting details, (3) understand what a selection or a portion of a selection is mostly about—in other words, understand the "gist" of that selection, and (4) produce an accurate summary of a selection. These skills are the building blocks that students need in order to develop a deeper understanding of what they read.

Objective 1

The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of culturally diverse written texts.

- (6) **Reading/word identification/vocabulary development.** The student acquires an extensive vocabulary through reading and systematic word study. The student is expected to
 - (B) rely on context to determine meanings of words and phrases such as figurative language, connotation and denotation of words, analogies, [idioms,] and technical vocabulary;
 - (C) apply meanings of prefixes, roots, and suffixes in order to comprehend; and
 - (E) use reference material such as glossary, dictionary, [thesaurus, and available technology] to determine precise meanings and usage.
- (7) **Reading/comprehension.** The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies. The student is expected to
 - (F) produce summaries of texts by identifying main ideas and their supporting details.
- (8) **Reading/variety of texts.** The student reads extensively and intensively for different purposes and in varied sources, including American literature. The student is expected to
 - (B) read in varied sources such as diaries, journals, textbooks, maps, newspapers, letters, speeches, memoranda, [electronic texts, and other media]; and
 - (C) read American and other world literature, including classic and contemporary works.

Objective 1—For Your Information

For vocabulary items, students are always provided with enough context clues to allow them to identify the correct meaning of the word as it is used in the reading selection. However, students should also be able to use a variety of word-identification strategies, such as word structure (prefixes, roots, and suffixes), analogies (a comparison of two words or phrases that suggests a similarity between them), figurative language (words or phrases used to convey a non-literal meaning), or connotation (the emotional impact of a word beyond its dictionary definition), in conjunction with context to help them understand the words they are reading.

- Items testing multiple-meaning words may require students to identify the correct answer from a sample dictionary entry. The entry includes the tested word, its part of speech, and multiple definitions of the word. Students can use the information given and context clues to choose the correct meaning of the word as it is used in the reading selection.
- Some items require students to recognize main idea(s) or gist in expository texts or in a limited portion of a literary text. These items clearly indicate to students that they are to focus on broad or central ideas.
- Summary items focus on the reading selection as a whole. A summary is a short paragraph that includes the main idea and the most important details of a text. Summary items can be attached to either literary or expository selections; however, for literary texts, students must be able to recognize a plot summary. For items assessing summarization, all answer choices are constructed authentically as short paragraphs.

TAKS Exit Level English Language Arts—Objective 2

To appreciate the literature they read in high school, students must develop an understanding of the literary elements that are at the heart of all stories. This understanding must go beyond mere identification to encompass the ways in which the parts of a story, singly and in combination, contribute to its overall meaning. Students must also understand the ways in which an author uses literary techniques and language to craft a story. In open-ended items assessing Objective 2, students must write a short response analyzing how literary elements, literary techniques, or figurative language function in a story.

Objective 2

The student will demonstrate an understanding of the effects of literary elements and techniques in culturally diverse written texts.

- (10) **Reading/literary response.** The student expresses and supports responses to various types of texts. The student is expected to
 - (B) use elements of text to defend, clarify, and negotiate responses and interpretations.
- (11) **Reading/literary concepts.** The student analyzes literary elements for their contributions to meaning in literary texts. The student is expected to
 - (A) compare and contrast varying aspects of texts such as themes, conflicts, and allusions both within and across texts;
 - (B) analyze relevance of setting and time frame to text's meaning;
 - (C) describe and analyze the development of plot and identify conflicts and how they are addressed and resolved;
 - (D) analyze [the melodies of] literary language, including its use of evocative words and rhythms;
 - (E) connect literature to historical contexts, current events, [and his/her own experiences]; and
 - (F) understand literary forms and terms such as author, drama, biography, myth, tall tale, dialogue, tragedy and comedy, [structure in poetry, epic, ballad,] protagonist, antagonist, paradox, analogy, dialect, and comic relief as appropriate to the selections being read.

Objective 2—For Your Information

- Items dealing with theme require students to recognize that any theme identified must be justified by evidence from the text.
- Items dealing with setting do not simply measure whether students can identify the time and/or the place of a selection. Instead, these items require students to analyze how the setting is central to and enhances the meaning of the text.

- To understand literature, students must learn to interpret literary techniques. Students must first be able to recognize literary techniques so that they then may analyze how the author uses these techniques to shape a reader's understanding of characters, events, and theme. Items that assess students' knowledge of literary techniques, such as foreshadowing, allusion, and symbolism, will be appropriate for eleventh graders; that is, students will not be asked questions about literary techniques that are overly sophisticated or too far beyond their developing understanding of author's craft. Literary techniques are assessed only when they are clearly present in the text.
- Items dealing with literary language move beyond simple identification of similes, metaphors, etc. Instead, these items require students to understand how an author uses non-literal language to create meaning and how that language functions in the text.
- Where appropriate, items may address historical or contemporary context and its contribution to meaning in a text. If the context is important to an understanding of the selection but is not explicit in the selection or so widely known that all students would be aware of that context, a short explanatory paragraph establishing the context is provided for the selection.

TAKS Exit Level English Language Arts—Objective 3

To read well at the high school level, students must go beyond their initial understanding or impressions of a selection. Students must be able to develop their own interpretations, make thoughtful judgments about what they read, examine how a selection relates to their own lives, and find meaningful connections across parts of a single selection or between two selections. Students must also be aware of the way an author crafts a selection. An author's purpose for writing, organizational decisions, point of view or attitude toward the subject, and unique use of language all affect the way a reader reads and understands a selection. In open-ended items assessing Objective 3, students must write a short response analyzing or evaluating some aspect of the expository selection or some aspect of text common to or based upon both selections. These are the skills students must learn in order to move beyond the literal meaning of a text, develop the deeper understanding necessary to think critically about what they read, connect what they know to new information, and become independent thinkers.

Objective 3

The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze and critically evaluate culturally diverse written texts and visual representations.

- (6) **Reading/word identification/vocabulary development.** The student acquires an extensive vocabulary through reading and systematic word study. The student is expected to
 - (F) discriminate between connotative and denotative meanings and interpret the connotative power of words; and
 - (G) read and understand analogies.
- (7) **Reading/comprehension.** The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies. The student is expected to
 - (E) analyze text structures such as compare/contrast, cause/effect, and chronological ordering for how they influence understanding; and
 - (G) draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them with text evidence [and experience].
- (8) **Reading/variety of texts.** The student reads extensively and intensively for different purposes in varied sources, including world literature. The student is expected to
 - (D) interpret the possible influences of the historical context on a literary work.
- (10) **Reading/literary response.** The student expresses and supports responses to various types of texts. The student is expected to
 - (B) use elements of text to defend, clarify, and negotiate responses and interpretations.
- (12) **Reading/analysis/evaluation.** The student reads critically to evaluate texts and the authority of sources. The student is expected to
 - (A) analyze the characteristics of clearly written texts, including the patterns of organization, syntax, and word choice;

- (B) evaluate the credibility of information sources, including how the writer's motivation may affect that credibility; and
- (C) recognize logical, deceptive, and/or faulty modes of persuasion in texts.
- (19) **Viewing/representing/interpretation.** The student understands and interprets visual representations. The student is expected to
 - (B) analyze relationships, ideas, [and cultures] as represented in various media; and
 - (C) distinguish the purposes of various media forms such as informative texts, entertaining texts, and advertisements.
- (20) **Viewing/representing/analysis.** The student analyzes and critiques the significance of visual representations. The student is expected to
 - (B) deconstruct media to get the main idea of the message's content; and
 - (C) evaluate and critique the persuasive techniques of media messages such as glittering generalities, logical fallacies, and symbols.

Objective 3—For Your Information

- Objective 3 items may assess any portion of the triplet. (Note: The viewing and representing piece is assessed under Objective 3 only.)
- To move beyond a basic understanding of two related texts, students must be able to compare, connect, and contrast ideas, themes, and issues across texts.
- Items that address the viewing and representing piece may require students to examine the purpose of various media forms, evaluate the persuasive techniques of media messages, or deconstruct media to determine the central idea of a message and how effectively that message has been conveyed.
- Items that assess a student's ability to recognize that authors organize information in specific ways focus on the organizational patterns authors choose in order to arrange and link ideas. It is important for students to know that authors organize ideas in various ways, depending upon how they want the reader to understand those ideas. Familiarity with common organizational patterns—for example, sequencing, description, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, and problem/solution—helps students learn how these patterns can affect the meaning of a text. If students are able to recognize this connection, they will develop their ability to comprehend, evaluate, and appreciate a wide variety of texts. For items of this type, students are expected to identify general patterns rather than use specific terminology.
- Items that assess the ability to read and think inferentially require students to move beyond their basic understanding of a text to demonstrate a deeper, more complete understanding of what they've read. These types of items can take many forms; for example, items may require students to draw a conclusion, make a reasonable prediction, understand the relationship between two parts of a text, understand how a text relates to their own lives, or understand the deeper meanings implied by a text.

- Where appropriate, items may require students to interpret the impact of historical context on a text or visual representation. If the context is important to a student's understanding but is not explicit in the text or visual representation, a short explanatory paragraph establishing such a context is provided for the selection.
- Items that require students to support interpretations or conclusions with evidence from the text include paraphrased ideas or sentences taken verbatim from the text. However, an individual item never mixes these answer-choice options; that is, paraphrased ideas and verbatim quotes are not combined in the same item. Answer choices using words, phrases, or sentences taken verbatim from the text are italicized.
- To determine how style, tone, and mood contribute to the effect of a text, students must be able to recognize how an author uses these elements to make a text unique. Students must understand that the way an author uses words, phrases, and sentences to make a text distinctive from others represents his or her style. The author creates a particular tone when his or her attitude toward the content is reflected in the text, affecting the way the student reads and understands it. For example, a text that has an objective tone is very different from one that has a sentimental tone. Mood is somewhat different from tone: mood is the feeling or atmosphere the writer creates through the details or language he or she uses. Items of this type are developed only when these elements are clearly present in the text. Items that assess style, tone, and mood will not be too sophisticated for eleventh graders or too far beyond their developing understanding of author's craft.
- To answer questions about how an author's motives or point of view affects the text, students will need to examine the author's attitude toward his or her subject or topic. The author's motivation for writing or the point of view he or she brings to the selection not only affects the tone of the piece but also the way the author shapes and develops his or her ideas. These items are developed for selections only when the writer's attitude is obvious and clearly has an effect on the text.
- Items assessing author's purpose require students to analyze how an author presents his or her ideas. To determine the purpose of a text—whether that purpose is informative, persuasive, expressive, or entertaining—students must recognize that the way authors organize their writing depends on which organizational pattern will best convey what they want the reader to understand.

DIRECTIONS

Read the two selections and the viewing and representing piece. Then answer the questions that follow.

Las Papas

by Julio Ortega Translated by Regina Harrison

- 1 He turned on the faucet of the kitchen sink and washed off the knife. As he felt the splashing water, he looked up through the front window and saw the September wind shaking the tender shoots of the trees on his street, the first hint of fall.
- My notes about what I am reading
- 2 He quickly washed the potatoes one by one. Although their coloring was light and serene, they were large and heavy. When he started to peel them, slowly, using the knife precisely and carefully, the child came into the kitchen.
- 3 "What are you going to cook?" he asked. He stood there waiting for an answer.
- 4 "Chicken cacciatore," the man answered, but the child didn't believe him. He was only six, but he seemed capable of objectively discerning between one chicken recipe and another.
- 5 "Wait and see," he promised.
- 6 "Is it going to have onions in it?" asked the child.
- 7 "Very few," he said.
- 8 The child left the kitchen unconvinced.
- 9 He finished peeling the potatoes and started to slice them. Through the window he saw the growing brightness of midday. That strong light seemed to paralyze the brilliant foliage on the trees. The inside of the potatoes had the same clean whiteness, and the knife penetrated it, as if slicing through soft clay.
- 10 Then he rinsed the onions and cut into them, chopping them up. He glanced at the recipe again and looked for seasonings in the pantry. The child came back in.
- "Chicken is really boring," the child said, almost in protest.
- "Not this recipe," he said. "It'll be great. You'll see."
- "Put a lot of stuff in it," the child recommended.
- 14 "It's going to have oregano, pepper, and even some sugar," he said.
- 15 The child smiled, approvingly.

- He dried the potato slices. The pulp was crisp, almost too white, more like an apple, perhaps. Where did these potatoes come from? Wyoming or Idaho, probably. The potatoes from his country, on the other hand, were grittier, with a heavy flavor of the land. There were dark ones, almost royal purple like fruit, and delicate yellow ones, like the yolk of an egg. They say there used to be more than a thousand varieties of potato. Many of them have disappeared forever.
- 17 The ones that were lost, had they been less firmly rooted in the soil? Were they more delicate varieties? Maybe they disappeared when control of the cultivated lands was deteriorating. Some people say, and it's probably true, that the loss of even one domesticated plant makes the world a little poorer, as does the destruction of a work of art in a city plundered by invaders. If a history of the lost varieties were written it might prove that no one would ever have gone hungry.
- Boiled, baked, fried, or stewed: the ways of cooking potatoes were a long story in themselves. He remembered what his mother had told him as a child: at harvest time, the largest potatoes would be roasted for everybody, and, in the fire, they would open up—just like flowers. That potato was probably one of the lost varieties, the kind that turned into flowers in the flames.
- 19 Are potatoes harvested at night in the moonlight? He was surprised how little he knew about something that came from his own country. As he thought about it, he believed harvest wasn't even the correct term. Gathering? Digging? What do you call this harvest from under the earth?
- For a long time he had avoided eating them. Even their name seemed unpleasant to him, papas. A sign of the provinces, one more shred of evidence of the meager resources, of underdevelopment—a potato lacked protein and was loaded with carbohydrates. French-fried potatoes seemed more tolerable to him: they were, somehow, in a more neutralized condition.
- At first, when he began to care for the child all by himself, he tried to simplify the ordeal of meals by going out to the corner restaurant. But he soon found that if he tried to cook something it passed the time, and he also amused himself with the child's curiosity.
- He picked up the cut slices. There wasn't much more to discover in them. It wasn't necessary to expect anything more of them than the density they already possessed, a crude cleanliness that was the earth's flavor. But that same sense transformed them right there in his hands, a secret flowering, uncovered by him in the kitchen. It was as if he

discovered one of the lost varieties of the Andean potato: the one that belonged to him, wondering, at noon.

- When the chicken began to fry in the skillet, the boy returned, attracted by its aroma. The man was in the midst of making the salad.
- 24 "Where's this food come from?" the child asked, realizing it was a different recipe.
- 25 "Peru," he replied.
- 26 "Not Italy?" said the child, surprised.
- 27 "I'm cooking another recipe now," he explained. "Potatoes come from Peru. You know that, right?"
- 28 "Yeah, but I forgot it."
- 29 "They're really good, and there are all kinds and flavors. Remember mangoes? You really used to like them when we went to see your grandparents."
- 30 "I don't remember them either. I only remember the lion in the zoo."
- "You don't remember the tree in Olivar Park?"
- 32 "Uh-huh. I remember that."
- 33 "We're going back there next summer, to visit the whole family."
- "What if there's an earthquake?"
- 35 The boy went for his Spanish reader and sat down at the kitchen table. He read the resonant names out loud, names that were also like an unfinished history, and the man had to go over to him every once in a while to help explain one thing or another.
- He tasted the sauce for the amount of salt, then added a bit of tarragon, whose intense perfume was delightful, and a bit of marjoram, a sweeter aroma.
- 37 He noticed how, outside, the light trapped by a tree slipped out from the blackened greenness of the leaves, now spilling onto the grass on the hill where their apartment house stood. The grass, all lit up, became an oblique field, a slope of tame fire seen from the window.
- He looked at the child, stuck on a page in his book; he looked at the calm, repeated blue of the sky; and he looked at the leaves of lettuce in his hands, leaves that crackled as they broke off and opened up like tender shoots, beside the faucet of running water.
- 39 As if it suddenly came back to him, he understood that he must have been six or seven when his father, probably forty years old, as he was now, used to cook at home on

Sundays. His father was always in a good mood as he cooked, boasting beforehand about how good the Chinese recipes were that he had learned in a remote hacienda in Peru. Maybe his father had made these meals for him, in this always incomplete past, to celebrate the meeting of father and son.

- 40 Unfamiliar anxiety, like a question without a subject, grew in him as he understood that he had never properly acknowledged his father's gesture; he hadn't even understood it. Actually, he had rejected his father's cooking one time, saying that it was too spicy. He must have been about fifteen then, a recent convert devoutly practicing the religion of natural foods, when he left the table with the plate of fish in his hands. He went out to the kitchen to turn on the faucet and quickly washed away the flesh boiled in soy sauce and ginger. His mother came to the kitchen and scolded him for what he had just done, a seemingly harmless act, but from then on an irreparable one. He returned to the table in silence, sullen, but his father didn't appear to be offended. Or did he suspect that one day his son's meal would be refused by his own son when he served it?
- The emotion could still wound him, but it could also make him laugh. There was a kind of irony in this repeating to a large extent his father's gestures as he concocted an unusual flavor in the kitchen. However, like a sigh that only acquires some meaning by turning upon itself, he discovered a symmetry in the repetitions, a symmetry that revealed the agony of emotions not easily understood.
- Just like animals that feed their young, we feed ourselves with a promise that food will taste good, he said to himself. We prepare a recipe with painstaking detail so that our children will recognize us in a complete history of flavor.
- 43 He must have muttered this out loud because the child looked up.
- "What?" he said. "Italian?"
- 45 "Peruvian," he corrected. "With a taste of the mountains, a mixture of Indian, Chinese, and Spanish."
- The child laughed, as if he'd heard a private joke in the sound of the words.
- 47 "When we go to Lima, I'll take you around to the restaurants," he promised.
- 48 The child broke into laughter again.
- 49 "It tastes good," said the child.
- "It tastes better than yesterday's," the man said.
- He poured some orange juice. The boy kneeled in the

chair and ate a bit of everything. He ate more out of curiosity than appetite.

- He felt once again that brief defenselessness that 52 accompanies the act of eating one's own cooking. Behind that flavor, he knew, lurked the raw materials, the separate foods cooked to render them neutral, a secret known only to the cook, who combined ingredients and proportions until something different was presented to eyes and mouth. This culinary act could be an adventure, a hunting foray. And the pleasure of creating a transformation must be shared, a kind of brief festival as the eaters decipher the flavors, knowing that an illusion has taken place.
- 53 Later, he looked for a potato in the pantry and he held it up against the unfiltered light in the window. It was large, and it fit perfectly in his barely closed hand. He was not surprised that the misshapen form of this swollen tuber adapted to the contour of his hand; he knew the potato adapted to different lands, true to its own internal form, as if it occupied stolen space. The entire history of his people was here, he said to himself, surviving in a territory overrun and pillaged several times, growing in marginal spaces, under siege and waiting.
- 54He left the apartment, went down the stairs and over to the tree on the hillock. It was a perfect day, as if the entire history of daytime were before him. The grass was ablaze, standing for all the grass he had ever seen. With both hands, he dug, and the earth opened up to him, cold. He placed the potato there, and he covered it up quickly. Feeling slightly embarrassed, he looked around. He went back up the stairs, wiping his hands, almost running.
- 55 The boy was standing at the balcony, waiting for him; he had seen it all.
- 56 "A tree's going to grow there!" said the boy, alarmed.
- "No," he said soothingly, "potatoes aren't trees. If it 57 grows, it will grow under the ground."
- 58 The child didn't seem to understand everything, but then suddenly he laughed.
- "Nobody will even know it's there," he said, excited by 59 such complicity with his father.

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23

Growing Up in the U.S.: A First Generation Look

by Elena Asturias

- When I was three, the name I learned to print was Elena María del Pilar Asturias Texidor. It would be shortened in school to Elena Asturias and, on occasion, altered by monolingual nuns to Helen.
- Growing up in the United States as a first generation Hispana has had its advantages and disadvantages. Assimilating an awareness of two cultures adds breadth to one's perspective. Among the most utilitarian benefits for society at large is the ability to share different traditions, cultures, and perspectives with others. The constant arrival of new immigrants nourishes this diversity, recharging society and inspiring those already here.
- 3 However, I do not consider myself a typical Hispana, but rather just one example of a Latin American raised in the U.S. My parents are both educators. My father, a retired university professor, is from Quezaltenango, Guatemala, and my mother, a community college administrator, was born in Fajardo, Puerto Rico. Although both cultures share common themes, there are tremendous differences in their respective traditions and attitudes. In our family, we often joked that theirs was an "inter-racial marriage."
- 4 Summers were spent in Guatemala, and we occasionally vacationed on La Perla del Caribe, renting a home on the beach. The time spent visiting our parents' homelands bound us to their cultures and nurtured an appreciation for the roots they had sown in us.
- 5 My sister and I were educated in the American school system and the Latin American social system. We learned to behave properly at home, which included sitting and conversing with adults rather than entrenching ourselves in a world all our own. Our parents instilled in us the importance of caring for elderly and ill family members with constancy and patience. The traditional strength of the Latin family helped us as we developed a bicultural existence in the United States.
- 6 Preserving the language of their homelands was also of great importance to my parents. We spoke only Spanish at home, though both my parents speak flawless English. Help with school work was the only exception to this rule; it was generously given in English. We read *Don Quixote* as well as

My notes about what I am reading

Cinderella. Our children's songs were those of CriCri, not the U.S. equivalent. Raised to respect our families, along with a healthy dose of fear lest we bring shame upon those we loved, we were motivated to study, learn and serve our community.

- Our parents' firm commitment to community service is perhaps the most unique heirloom handed down to us as children. They took us on peace marches in the 60s and 70s even before we were able to walk. I vividly recall the view perched atop my father's shoulders of a massive swell of humanity marching for peace.
- 8 My parents also taught us about our family history: how our grandfather was jailed and had to flee Guatemala because of his involvement in land reform; how he received the Orden del Quetzal, the highest medal given to a civilian, for his work in vaccinating an entire region of Guatemala. These and other similar stories gave us a special sense of pride in our heritage and obligation to our community.
- 9 As teenagers, my mother enlisted our help in the political campaigns she supported. We distributed leaflets, made phone calls, canvassed to get the vote out and were accustomed to attending and helping organize fundraisers and other political events. This involvement in the U.S. political process helped us see that individuals can make a difference and that opportunities to do so are there for achievement.
- What we learned and lived at home set us up for very real confrontations with the world outside our four walls. The early curfews, the chaperons, the conservative manner we dressed—all contributed to the feeling that we were different. Our parents explained that these differences would add something extra to our characters. We were special, not different, and therefore more was expected of us. What made these "extra" requirements feasible was our parents' ability to balance our strict upbringing with the love and attention we needed.
- Although some advantages of growing up in the U.S. are harder to measure, I gained a type of personal strength, self-reliance and independence I may not have found if I'd been raised in the more sheltered home life of the traditional Latin American household. However, there are trade-offs—the security and stability, the sense of belonging, of knowing one's roots fostered in a strong Latin home are often sacrificed to the risktaking needed to maximize one's potential in the U.S.
- 12 The more I visited my Latin American cousins and relatives, the more I began to notice a growing distance in our attitudes over politics, social issues and familial

questions. Our educations were shaping us into citizens of our respective countries with correspondent attitudes and concerns. Although we retained similar cultural values and traditions, the older we got the less we agreed on the international scale.

- We celebrated Christmas on December 24th as well as the Three Kings Day, preparing for the arrival of the giftbearers with cereal for the camels and wine for the weary travelers. Mornings of January 6th meant awakening early and rushing downstairs to check shoes left by the door for our unwrapped gifts and the remains of the goodies we'd left. Special occasions were celebrated with tamales, paches (Guatemala) and pasteles (Puerto Rico) and Las Mañanitas was recited on our birthdays. The outward manifestations of Latin American culture were not only for our enjoyment, but for the enjoyment of our non-Latin friends who were always included in these celebrations.
- Perhaps the most poignant loss on a personal level is the inability to express myself as well in Spanish as in English. It's difficult when you're educated in one language to theorize in another or to write on topics as fluidly. My hope lies in the adage "practice makes perfect!"
- If our upbringing taught us anything it is that as Hispanas transplanted as such in the U.S., we have a responsibility to educate society in the depth and beauty of our Latin American heritage and the immense contribution we can make to this country. By helping new arrivals and those less fortunate, we ensure the survival of our identity and the reinforcement of our values. To reiterate an appropriate verse of Jose Martí, recently quoted in Los Angeles at the National Network of Hispanic Women's Round-table, "... No hay caminos, los caminos se forman al hacer—no para nosotros pero para los por venir" ("There are no established roads; roads are built by doing, not for ourselves, but for those to come").

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Use "Las Papas" (pp. 18-22) to answer questions 1-7.

- 1 What is paragraph 20 mostly about?
 - **A** The child's father knows potatoes only by their Spanish name.
 - **B** Potatoes are difficult to harvest and prepare.
 - C The child's father thinks that potatoes are not nutritious.
 - **D*** Potatoes represent something unpleasant to the child's father.

Objective 1

- 2 In paragraph 9, the author uses a simile to
 - A* demonstrate the ease of cutting the potatoes
 - $\begin{array}{ll} \boldsymbol{B} & \text{describe the brightness of the midday} \\ & \text{light} \end{array}$
 - **C** emphasize the whiteness of the potato
 - **D** show the effect of light upon the trees

Objective 2

In this item students are required to move beyond simple identification of various types of literary language. Instead, they must understand how that literary language functions to convey meaning.

- 3 Paragraph 40 represents a
 - **A** change in the story's point of view
 - **B*** flashback to the man's youth
 - C comparison of several different cultures
 - **D** foreshadowed event in the story

Objective 2

- 4 The man might have reacted differently to his own father's cooking if he had understood the
 - A expense of the ingredients used to prepare the meal
 - **B** nutritional value of fish
 - C* love and care involved in the preparation of the meal
 - **D** history behind his father's Chinese recipes

Objective 3

- **5** The author includes a question at the end of paragraph 40 to show that
 - **A*** the man is beginning to understand his own father's reaction
 - **B** mealtime can be very stressful for some families
 - C the child will not enjoy the meal that his father has prepared
 - **D** sometimes family members do not like the same kinds of food

Objective 3

Authors use specific techniques to achieve intended effects. This item tests students' ability to recognize why an author may make certain choices.

Use "Growing Up in the U.S." (pp. 23–25) to answer questions 6–12.

- **6** Which quotation from the selection best summarizes the author's view of her upbringing?
 - A The constant arrival of new immigrants nourishes this diversity, recharging society and inspiring those already here.
 - **B** Preserving the language of their homelands was also of great importance to my parents.
 - C The early curfews, the chaperons, the conservative manner we dressed—all contributed to the feeling that we were different.
 - **D*** My sister and I were educated in the American school system and the Latin American social system.

Objective 3

In items such as this, students need not search the text to locate the specific lines quoted in the answer choices. Instead, students need to recognize which piece of textual evidence answers the question.

- 7 How does the author support the idea that blending two cultures is beneficial?
 - A* By citing examples from her own experience
 - **B** By writing her essay in both English and Spanish
 - C By comparing her experiences to those of her cousins
 - D By quoting the famous Cuban poet Jose Martí

Objective 3

Students are asked to recognize the ways in which authors may be selective about the information they include in order to achieve their purpose.

- **8** Which word from paragraph 14 helps the reader understand the meaning of the word *poignant*?
 - **A** perhaps
 - \mathbf{B}^* loss
 - C personal
 - **D** express

Objective 1

- **9** Which of these is the best summary of the selection?
 - A Elena Asturias did not consider herself a typical Hispana while growing up in the United States. She was able to attend private school, vacation in Guatemala, and celebrate holidays for weeks at a time. Her parents explained that she was special and that more would be expected of her.
 - B A young woman looks back on her childhood as a first-generation Hispana. She remembers the songs she sang, the clothes she wore, and the foods she ate. These memories help her understand the risk taking that is needed to maximize her potential in the United States.
 - C* Elena Asturias was shown by her parents how to incorporate elements of her Latin American heritage into her daily life. She grew up respecting family members, speaking Spanish at home, and performing community service. This upbringing taught her the importance of sharing her culture with others.
 - D A young woman thinks about the influence her parents have had on her throughout her life. They forced her to spend time conversing with adults, dress in a conservative manner, and attend large peace marches. She regrets that her background has led to an increasing distance between herself and her Latin American relatives.

Objective 1

Note that answer choices for summary items are authentically written as short paragraphs.

- 10 The selection's point of view helps the reader understand —
 - **A** why the author's parents wanted their children to understand the U.S. political process
 - **B*** how the author has used her experiences to form her identity
 - C who was responsible for teaching the author to speak flawless English
 - **D** why the author resents her conservative upbringing

Objective 2

- 11 In paragraph 6, why does the author refer to *Don Quixote* and *Cinderella*?
 - **A** To show the importance of fairy tales in Spanish households
 - **B** To prove that her family read only literature that was widely respected
 - C To provide the reader with examples of Spanish literature
 - **D*** To offer examples of her parents' commitment to biculturalism

Objective 2

- 12 The author develops the selection by
 - A recounting childhood experiences in the order of their importance
 - **B** describing the lives of her parents in their countries of origin
 - C* comparing the contributions of each of her native cultures
 - **D** analyzing the behavior of children in Latin American households

Objective 3

Use "Las Papas" and "Growing Up in the U.S." to answer question 13.

Crossover Item

Crossover items apply to both the literary selection and the expository selection. These items ask questions that link the content of two selections.

- 13 What is one symbol of cultural heritage used by the authors of "Las Papas" and "Growing Up in the U.S."?
 - A Children's songs
 - **B** Romantic poetry
 - C Local landmarks
 - **D*** Special foods

Objective 3

This item is an example of a multiple-choice crossover item.

Use the visual representation on page 26 to answer questions 14 and 15.

- 14 One underlying message of the poster is that
 - **A*** many cultures contribute to our society
 - **B** heritage associations rely on donations from the public
 - C cultural activities are often ignored
 - **D** very few people understand their own heritage

Objective 3

In this item students are asked to deconstruct media (that is, examine the various parts of the poster, such as text and graphics, to understand how they work together) in order to determine what message the poster is communicating to readers.

- 15 What is the poster's slogan?
 - A Sponsored by the Tri-County Heritage Association
 - **B** Folklife Festival
 - C Call 555-4350 for more information
 - **D*** Cultivate Your Roots

Objective 3

OPEN-ENDED ITEMS

16	In "Las Papas," how does cooking connect the child's father to his past? Support your answer with evidence from the story.			
Objec	Objective 2			
17	In "Growing Up in the U.S.," how have the author's experiences shaped her attitude toward others? Support your answer with evidence from the selection.			
Objective 3				
18	How do the parents in "Las Papas" and "Growing Up in the U.S." attempt to share their cultural heritage with their children? Support your answer with evidence from both selections.			
Objective 3				
This item is an example of an open-ended crossover item. In responding to open-ended items that range across two selections, students must offer an idea or analysis based on both selections <u>and</u> provide relevant, strongly connected textual evidence from both selections.				

READING RUBRIC—LITERARY SELECTION OBJECTIVE 2

Score Point 0 — Insufficient

In insufficient responses, the student

may offer an incorrect theme, character trait, conflict, or change
may offer a theme, character, conflict, or change that is too general or vague to determine whether it is reasonable
may incorrectly analyze a literary technique or figurative expression
may offer an analysis that is too general or vague to determine whether it is reasonable
may present only a plot summary
may not address the question in any way or may answer a different question than the one asked
may offer only incomplete or irrelevant textual evidence

In addition, insufficient responses may lack clarity.

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

READING RUBRIC—LITERARY SELECTION OBJECTIVE 2

SCORE POINT 1 — PARTIALLY SUFFICIENT

In **partially sufficient** responses, the student

	may offer a reasonable theme, character trait, conflict, or change but provide only general, incomplete, or partially accurate/relevant textual evidence or provide no textual evidence at all	
	may offer a reasonable analysis of a literary technique or figurative expression but provide only general, incomplete, or partially accurate/relevant textual evidence or provide no textual evidence at all	
	may offer a reasonable idea or analysis and may provide textual evidence, but this evidence is only weakly connected to the idea or analysis	
	may offer accurate/relevant textual evidence without providing an idea or analysis	
In additio	n, partially sufficient responses may be somewhat unclear or vague.	
Evidence	may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.	

READING RUBRIC—LITERARY SELECTION OBJECTIVE 2

Score Point 2 — Sufficient	
In sufficient responses, the student	
must offer a reasonable theme, character trait, conflict, or change and support it accurate/relevant textual evidence	with
☐ must offer a reasonable analysis of a literary technique or figurative expression support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence	and
In addition, sufficient responses must be clear and specific.	

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

READING RUBRIC—LITERARY SELECTION OBJECTIVE 2

In **exemplary** responses, the student

Score Point 3 — Exemplary

must offer a particularly thoughtful or insightful theme, character trait, conflict,	or	change
and strongly support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence		

☐ must offer a particularly thoughtful or insightful analysis of a literary technique or figurative expression and strongly support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence

In addition, exemplary responses must demonstrate the student's depth of understanding and ability to effectively connect textual evidence to the idea or analysis.

SCORE POINT 0 — INSUFFICIENT

	In	insufficient	responses,	the	student
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0	may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that is not based on the text
	may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that does not address the question
	may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that is not reasonable
C	may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that is too general or vague to determine whether it is reasonable
	may incorrectly analyze or evaluate a characteristic of the text
C	may not address the question in any way or may answer a different question than the one asked
	may offer only incomplete or irrelevant textual evidence
In additi	on, insufficient responses may lack clarity.

SCORE POINT 1 — PARTIALLY SUFFICIENT

In **partially sufficient** responses, the student

may draw a reasonable conclusion, offer a reasonable interpretation, or make a reasonable prediction that is supported only by general, incomplete, or partially accurate/relevant textual evidence or provide no textual evidence at all
may offer a reasonable analysis or evaluation of a characteristic of the text that is supported only by general, incomplete, or partially accurate/relevant textual evidence or provide no textual evidence at all
may offer a reasonable idea, analysis, or evaluation and may provide textual evidence, but this evidence is only weakly connected to the idea, analysis, or evaluation
☐ may offer accurate/relevant textual evidence without drawing a conclusion, offering an interpretation, making a prediction, or providing an analysis or evaluation
In addition, partially sufficient responses may be somewhat unclear or vague.
Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

Score Point 2 — Sufficient				
In sufficient responses, the student				
☐ must draw a reasonable conclusion, offer a reasonable interpretation, or make a reasonable prediction and must support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence				
must offer a reasonable analysis or evaluation of a characteristic of the selection and must support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence				
In addition, sufficient responses must be clear and specific.				
Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.				

Score Point 3 — Exemplary
In exemplary responses, the student
 must offer a particularly thoughtful or insightful conclusion, interpretation, or prediction and strongly support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence
☐ must offer a particularly thoughtful or insightful analysis or evaluation of a characteristic of the text and strongly support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence
In addition, exemplary responses show strong evidence of the student's depth of understanding and ability to effectively connect textual evidence to the idea, analysis, or evaluation.

SCORE POINT 0 — INSUFFICIENT

In	insufficien	t responses.	the	student

	may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that is not based on the selections
	may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that does not address the question
	may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that is not reasonable
	may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that is too general or vague to determine whether it is reasonable
	may incorrectly analyze or evaluate a characteristic of text based on both selections
	may not address the question in any way or may answer a different question than the one asked
	may offer only incomplete or irrelevant textual evidence from one or both selections
In additio	on, insufficient responses may lack clarity.

SCORE POINT 1 — PARTIALLY SUFFICIENT

In partially sufficient responses, the student

may draw a reasonable conclusion, offer a reasonable interpretation, or make a reasonable prediction based on both selections but supported only by general, incomplete, or partially accurate/relevant textual evidence from one or both selections
may draw a reasonable conclusion, offer a reasonable interpretation, or make a reasonable prediction based on both selections but may offer textual support from only one selection or may offer no textual support at all
may offer a reasonable analysis or evaluation of a characteristic of text based on both selections that is supported only by general, incomplete, or partially accurate/relevant textual evidence from one or both selections
may offer a reasonable analysis or evaluation of a characteristic of text based on both selections but may offer textual support from only one selection or may offer no textual support at all
may offer a reasonable idea, analysis, or evaluation based on both selections and may provide textual evidence from both selections, but this evidence is only weakly connected to the idea, analysis, or evaluation
may offer accurate/relevant textual evidence from both selections but may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, make a prediction, or provide an analysis or evaluation based on only one selection
may offer accurate/relevant textual evidence from both selections without drawing a conclusion, offering an interpretation, making a prediction, or providing an analysis or evaluation

In addition, partially sufficient responses may be somewhat unclear or vague or may indicate that the student has difficulty making connections across selections.

Score Point 2 — Sufficient

In sufficient responses, the stude	the student	ponses,	res	icient	suffi	In
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must draw a reasonable conclusion, offer a reasonable interpretation, or make a reasonable
prediction based on both selections and must support it with accurate/relevant textual
evidence from both selections

☐ must offer a reasonable analysis or evaluation of a characteristic of text based on both selections and must support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence from both selections

In addition, sufficient responses indicate that the student is able to make clear and specific connections across selections.

Score Point 3 — Exemplary

In exemplary responses, the student

must offer a particularly thoughtful or insightful conclusion, interpretation, or prediction based on both selections and strongly support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence from both selections
must offer a particularly thoughtful or insightful analysis or evaluation of a characteristic of text based on both selections and strongly support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence from both selections
on, exemplary responses indicate that the student is able to make meaningful connections elections. These responses show strong evidence of the student's depth of understanding and

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

ability to effectively connect textual evidence to the idea, analysis, or evaluation.

TAKS Exit Level English Language Arts—Objective 4

The ability to communicate thoughts and ideas through writing helps students become successful, not only in school but throughout their lives. In order to communicate effectively, students must organize and develop ideas in a logical, coherent, and interesting manner that is easy for the reader to follow and understand. Objective 4 tests each student's ability to produce an organized and well-developed composition in response to a prompt. The prompt is worded so that students have broad latitude in crafting an individual response. Students can use any organizational strategy that allows them to write an effective piece—they can write a story, a description, a philosophical piece, an expository piece—or they can combine approaches. However students choose to respond, it is important that the composition they write is uniquely theirs—that it is authentic and represents their best thinking and writing.

Objective 4

The student will, within a given context, produce an effective composition for a specific purpose.

- (1) **Writing/purposes.** The student writes in a variety of forms, including business, personal, literary, and persuasive texts, for various audiences and purposes. The student is expected to
 - (B) write in a voice and style appropriate to audience and purpose; and
 - (C) organize ideas in writing to ensure coherence, logical progression, and support for ideas.
- (2) **Writing/writing processes.** The student uses recursive writing processes when appropriate. The student is expected to
 - (B) develop drafts [both alone and collaboratively] by organizing and reorganizing content and by refining style to suit occasion, audience, and purpose; and
 - (C) proofread writing for appropriateness of organization, content, style, and conventions.
- (5) **Writing/evaluation.** The student evaluates his/her own writing and the writings of others. The student is expected to
 - (A) evaluate writing for both mechanics and content.

Objective 4—For Your Information

Objective 4 focuses on the aspects of writing that contribute to the quality of a composition's content. These aspects represent the first four sections of the rubric: focus and coherence, organization, development of ideas, and voice. It is not enough for students to know what these terms mean. Students must be able to "see" how these terms affect a piece of writing. For example, how does a composition that lacks focus and coherence look different from one that is strong in that area? How does superficial development look different from development that has depth? Once students start to see these kinds of differences and are given multiple opportunities to write, over time their writing will become more unique and compelling. Students will gain confidence in their ability to communicate effectively.

On TAKS students must

- respond directly to the prompt. Although students are given wide latitude in this regard, the link between the composition and the prompt must be evident.
- remain focused on the topic throughout the composition. The first step in establishing a strong focus is for students to decide what they want their controlling, or main, idea to be. At the high school level, this idea is called a thesis statement. Everything students write in their composition should contribute to a reader's understanding of that idea. Any sentences that do not do this weaken the focus and coherence of the composition.
- organize their ideas so that each sentence is logically linked to the next sentence. The sentences should form a kind of "chain." Each sentence moves the composition forward and deepens the reader's understanding of the ideas; no sentences are extraneous or overlap. In addition, each paragraph should logically lead to the next; the relationships between paragraphs should be clear. Each paragraph should "build" on the one before it.
- develop their ideas in depth. To understand how to create writing that has depth, students must first understand the relationship between thinking and writing, for without good thinking, good writing is impossible. Depth depends less on how much students say than on the quality of what they say. Good development is based on the ability to "layer" and "flesh out" ideas so that each sentence a student writes adds meaning to the sentences that come before it. Good development is also original; that's why students who simply write a plot summary of something they've read in a book or seen on television or in a movie or who simply write the lyrics of a song they've heard receive a failing score. The writing in these cases is not really theirs. Original development is also a problem for most students who follow formulas; because the development is contrived, students are usually unable to achieve any depth.
- express an individual voice. Expressing an individual voice means that the composition engages the reader. The student's writing sounds authentic and original and genuinely expresses the student's personality or personal viewpoint. When a student responds in a highly individualistic way, his or her voice is naturally expressed. Because the composition has a "face," a meaningful connection is established between the reader and the writer. On the other hand, formulaic writing tends to be "faceless" and, more often than not, prevents a student from having the opportunity to express his or her own unique voice.

TAKS Exit Level English Language Arts—Objective 5

To write well, students must be able to apply the conventions of the English language. This means that students must have the following skills. First, when students write a composition, they must have the ability to follow the rules of correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, grammar, usage, and sentence structure. Second, they must have the ability to write effective sentences and use words and phrases that enhance the reader's understanding of their ideas. Although students are not expected to produce error-free writing on the test, they are expected to write as clearly and correctly as possible. The stronger the writing conventions are, the more likely it is that students will be able to produce an effective composition.

Objective 5

The student will produce a piece of writing that demonstrates a command of the conventions of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure.

- (2) **Writing/writing processes.** The student uses recursive writing processes when appropriate. The student is expected to
 - (C) proofread writing for appropriateness of organization, content, style, and conventions.
- (3) **Writing/grammar/usage/conventions/spelling.** The student relies increasingly on the conventions and mechanics of written English, including the rules of usage and grammar, to write clearly and effectively. The student is expected to
 - (A) produce legible work that shows accurate spelling and correct use of the conventions of punctuation and capitalization [such as italics and ellipses];
 - (B) demonstrate control over grammatical elements such as subject-verb agreement, pronoun-antecedent agreement, verb forms, and parallelism; and
 - (C) compose increasingly more involved sentences that contain gerunds, participles, and infinitives in their various functions.
- (5) **Writing/evaluation.** The student evaluates his/her own writing and the writings of others. The student is expected to
 - (A) evaluate writing for both mechanics and content.

Objective 5—For Your Information

Objective 5 assesses a student's ability to communicate effectively by demonstrating a command of the conventions of written English in a composition.

The evaluation of conventions is based on a holistic judgment of the student's mastery of conventions overall, not on the total number of errors or on the number of any certain type of error. This holistic judgment takes into account the degree of sophistication the student attempts in constructing sentences and using words.

- Some errors related to conventions are more serious than others because they have a greater effect on a student's ability to communicate clearly. For example, using pronouns without clear antecedents (to whom or to what the pronoun refers) is generally more disruptive to the reader's understanding than capitalizing words incorrectly.
- Students are permitted to use an English language dictionary and thesaurus during the reading and composition portions of the writing test.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION

Grade 11 Exit Level Sample Prompt

Write an essay explaining the importance of understanding your heritage.

The information in the box below will help you remember what you should think about when you write your composition.

REMEMBER—YOU SHOULD write about the assigned topic make your writing thoughtful and interesting make sure that each sentence you write contributes to your composition as a whole make sure that your ideas are clear and easy for the reader to follow write about your ideas in depth so that the reader is able to develop a good understanding of what you are saying proofread your writing to correct errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure

EACH COMPOSITION AT THIS SCORE POINT IS AN INEFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF THE WRITER'S IDEAS.

Focus and Coherence

- Individual paragraphs and/or the composition as a whole are not focused. The writer may shift abruptly from idea to idea, making it difficult for the reader to understand how the ideas included in the composition are related.
- The composition as a whole has little, or no, sense of completeness. The introduction and conclusion, if present, may be perfunctory.
- A substantial amount of writing may be extraneous because it does not contribute to the development or quality of the composition. In some cases, the composition overall may be only weakly connected to the prompt.

Organization

- The writer's progression of thought from sentence to sentence and/or paragraph to paragraph is not logical. Sometimes weak progression results from an absence of transitions or from the use of transitions that do not make sense. At other times, the progression of thought is simply not evident, even if appropriate transitions are included.
- An organizational strategy is not evident. The writer may present ideas in a random or haphazard way, making the composition difficult to follow.
- Wordiness and/or repetition may stall the progression of ideas.

Development of Ideas

- The writer presents one or more ideas but provides little or no development of those ideas.
- The writer presents one or more ideas and attempts to develop them. However, this development is so general or vague that it prevents the reader from understanding the writer's ideas.
- The writer presents only a plot summary of a published piece of writing, a movie, or a television show.
- The writer omits information, which creates significant gaps between ideas. These gaps prevent the reader from clearly understanding those ideas.

Voice

- The writer does not engage the reader, therefore failing to establish a connection.
- There may be little or no sense of the writer's individual voice. The composition does not sound authentic or original. The writer is unable to express his/her individuality or unique perspective.

- There is little or no evidence in the composition that the writer can correctly apply the conventions of the English language. Severe and/or frequent errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure may cause the writing to be unclear or difficult to read. These errors weaken the composition by causing an overall lack of fluency.
- The writer may misuse or omit words and phrases and may frequently write awkward sentences. These weaknesses interfere with the effective communication of ideas.

EACH COMPOSITION AT THIS SCORE POINT IS A SOMEWHAT EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF THE WRITER'S IDEAS.

Focus and Coherence

- Individual paragraphs and/or the composition as a whole are somewhat focused. The writer may shift quickly from idea to idea, but the reader has no difficulty understanding how the ideas included in the composition are related.
- The composition as a whole has some sense of completeness. The writer includes an introduction and conclusion, but they may be superficial.
- Some of the writing may be extraneous because it does not contribute to the development or quality of the composition as a whole.

Organization

- The writer's progression of thought from sentence to sentence and/or paragraph to paragraph may not always be smooth or completely logical. Sometimes the writer needs to strengthen the progression by including more meaningful transitions; at other times the writer simply needs to establish a clearer link between ideas.
- The organizational strategy or strategies the writer chooses do not enable the writer to present ideas effectively.
- Some wordiness and/or repetition may be evident, but these weaknesses do not completely stall the progression of ideas.

Development of Ideas

- The writer attempts to develop the composition by listing ideas or briefly explaining them. In both of these cases, the development remains superficial, limiting the reader's understanding and appreciation of the writer's ideas.
- The writer presents one or more ideas and attempts to develop them. However, there is little
 evidence of depth of thinking because this development may be somewhat general, inconsistent, or
 contrived.
- The writer may omit small pieces of information that create minor gaps between ideas. However, these gaps do not prevent the reader from understanding those ideas.

Voice

- There may be moments when the writer engages the reader but fails to sustain the connection.
- Individual paragraphs or sections of the composition may sound authentic or original, but the writer has difficulty expressing his/her individuality or unique perspective.

- Errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure throughout the composition may indicate a limited control of conventions. Although these errors do not cause the writing to be unclear, they weaken the overall fluency of the composition.
- The writer may include some simple or inaccurate words and phrases and may write some awkward sentences. These weaknesses limit the overall effectiveness of the communication of ideas.

EACH COMPOSITION AT THIS SCORE POINT IS A GENERALLY EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF THE WRITER'S IDEAS.

Focus and Coherence

- Individual paragraphs and the composition as a whole are, for the most part, focused. The writer generally shows the clear relationship between ideas, making few sudden shifts from one idea to the next.
- The composition as a whole has a sense of completeness. The introduction and conclusion add some depth to the composition.
- Most of the writing contributes to the development or quality of the composition as a whole.

Organization

- The writer's progression of thought from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph is generally smooth and controlled. For the most part, transitions are meaningful, and the links between ideas are logical.
- The organizational strategy or strategies the writer chooses are generally effective.
- Wordiness and/or repetition, if present, are minor problems that do not stall the progression of ideas.

Development of Ideas

- The writer attempts to develop all the ideas included in the composition. Although some ideas may be developed more thoroughly and specifically than others, the development overall reflects some depth of thought, enabling the reader to generally understand and appreciate the writer's ideas.
- The writer's presentation of some ideas may be thoughtful. There may be little evidence that the writer has been willing to take compositional risks when developing the topic.

Voice

- The writer engages the reader and sustains that connection throughout most of the composition.
- For the most part, the composition sounds authentic and original. The writer is generally able to express his/her individuality or unique perspective.

- The writer generally demonstrates a good command of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure. Although the writer may make minor errors, they create few disruptions in the fluency of the composition.
- The words, phrases, and sentence structures the writer uses are generally appropriate and contribute to the overall effectiveness of the communication of ideas.

EACH COMPOSITION AT THIS SCORE POINT IS A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF THE WRITER'S IDEAS.

Focus and Coherence

- Individual paragraphs and the composition as a whole are focused. This sustained focus enables the reader to understand and appreciate how the ideas included in the composition are related.
- The composition as a whole has a sense of completeness. The introduction and conclusion are meaningful because they add depth to the composition.
- Most, if not all, of the writing contributes to the development or quality of the composition as a whole.

Organization

- The writer's progression of thought from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph is smooth and controlled. The writer's use of meaningful transitions and the logical movement from idea to idea strengthen this progression.
- The organizational strategy or strategies the writer chooses enhance the writer's ability to present ideas clearly and effectively.

Development of Ideas

- The writer's thorough and specific development of each idea creates depth of thought in the composition, enabling the reader to truly understand and appreciate the writer's ideas.
- The writer's presentation of ideas is thoughtful or insightful. The writer may approach the topic from an unusual perspective, use his/her unique experiences or view of the world as a basis for writing, or make interesting connections between ideas. In all these cases, the writer's willingness to take compositional risks enhances the quality of the content.

Voice

- The writer engages the reader and sustains this connection throughout the composition.
- The composition sounds authentic and original. The writer is able to express his/her individuality or unique perspective.

- The overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the composition. The writer demonstrates a consistent command of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure. When the writer attempts to communicate complex ideas through sophisticated forms of expression, he/she may make minor errors as a result of these compositional risks. These types of errors do not detract from the overall fluency of the composition.
- The words, phrases, and sentence structures the writer uses enhance the overall effectiveness of the communication of ideas.

TAKS Exit Level English Language Arts—Objective 6

Revision is an integral part of the writing process. After the first draft the competent writer often adds, deletes, combines, and/or rearranges words and sentences as well as adds effective transitions to better organize and more fully develop his or her thoughts and ideas. Editing, or proofreading, is also an important part of the writing process. During this stage the skillful writer checks for correct sentence structure, accurate spelling, and proper application of standard grammar and usage. These last two parts of the writing process—revising and editing—enable the writer to produce a clearer, more effective piece of writing.

Objective 6

The student will demonstrate the ability to revise and proofread to improve the clarity and effectiveness of a piece of writing.

- (2) **Writing/writing processes.** The student uses recursive writing processes when appropriate. The student is expected to
 - (C) proofread writing for appropriateness of organization, content, style, and conventions.
- (3) **Writing/grammar/usage/conventions/spelling.** The student relies increasingly on the conventions and mechanics of written English, including the rules of usage and grammar, to write clearly and effectively. The student is expected to
 - (A) produce legible work that shows accurate spelling and correct use of the conventions of punctuation and capitalization [such as italics and ellipses];
 - (B) demonstrate control over grammatical elements such as subject-verb agreement, pronoun-antecedent agreement, verb forms, and parallelism;
 - (C) compose increasingly more involved sentences that contain gerunds, participles, and infinitives in their various functions; and
 - (D) produce error-free writing in the final draft.
- (5) **Writing/evaluation.** The student evaluates his/her own writing and the writings of others. The student is expected to
 - (A) evaluate writing for both mechanics and content.

Objective 6—For Your Information

Objective 6 assesses a student's ability to revise and proofread to improve the clarity and effectiveness of created samples of student writing. This use of skills in a peer-editing context is most representative of the revising and editing tasks that students are required to do in high school. All items assessing Objective 6 will be multiple-choice.

- Items that test organizational skills include choosing the most logical position in which to place an additional sentence in a paragraph, deleting an extraneous sentence, changing the order of sentences within a paragraph, or adding a transitional word or phrase to create a logical link between sentences or paragraphs.
- Items focused on sentence structure assess a student's ability to recognize both correct and effective sentences. Some items test whether a student can identify correct sentence boundaries; that is, the student must be able to distinguish fragments and run-ons from correct sentences. Other items present a single sentence that needs to be revised or two sentences that need to be combined; in these cases, the student is asked to identify the sentence that represents the most effective revision or sentence combining.
- Items focused on homonyms assess a student's ability to know which word to use in a particular context (*their books*, not *there books* or *they're books*). Understanding which homonym to use is a skill high school students must have in order to communicate effectively.
- Items that assess word choice are of two types: items that require students to replace an indefinite reference with the correct antecedent and items that require students to replace a word or phrase that is vague or too informal with one that is more specific or appropriate for the style and tone of the piece of writing.
- Capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage items assess the range of rules commonly taught in English I and II.
- Spelling items include both rule- and sight-based words that are within the writing vocabulary of high school students.

Juanita has written this report for a science assignment. She has asked you to read the report and think about the corrections and improvements she needs to make. When you finish reading the report, answer the multiple-choice questions that follow.

It's a Bird! It's a Plane! It's Sky Station!

- (1) "UFOs Are Hovering Above 250 of the World's Major Cities." (2) What would you think if you read this headline in your local newspaper? (3) Surprisingly, this scenario isn't nearly as improbible as you might think. (4) No, the world isn't about to be invaded by unidentified flying objects. (5) But if Sky Station International has it's way, solar-electric airships will be floating 13 miles above every major metropolitan area in the world in just a few years.
- (6) Sky Station creators plan to use unmanned, lighter-than-air, platform-type airships.

 (7) These ships, which are essentially just large gas balloons, resemble blimps. (8) They are built of a high-strength fabric that is filled with a lifting gas such as hydrogen, helium, hot air, or natural gas. (9) After being constructed and inflating inside a hangar on the ground, each ship will be guided to an altitude of 70,000 feet. (10) It will remain there, above storms and air traffic, for five to ten years. (11) Although state-of-the-art materials make the possibility of rupture almost nonexistent. (12) An onboard monitoring system will be able to immediately detect any loss of buoyancy. (13) Then an automated control system can propel the ship to a safe water landing if necessary. (14) In most cases, Sky Station mechanics think they will be able to repair the damaged ship and send it back into service.
- (15) Each ship will be equipped with sensors that will deliver data about problems such as atmospheric, land, and sea pollution. (16) In addition, Sky Station developers hope that the ships will play a significant role in monitoring ozone levels, climate changes, and weather patterns. (17) Weather around the globe has been somewhat unpredictable over the last

several years. (18) These airships could also be used to gauge traffic patterns, aid in searchand-rescue missions, and provide mapping services.

- (19) Most importantly, however, Sky Station ships may be able to provide reliable and affordable high-speed wireless communications. (20) Developers think they will be superior to today's satellite communications for several reasons. (21) The Sky Station platforms will be closer to Earth, so it will require less power and smaller antennae. (22) Furthermore, no launch vehicle will be needed to position them and they will be easy to recall when servicing is necessary. (23) Sky Station ships could begin to play a major role in telephone and television transmissions, video conferencing, and Internet services.
- (24) No, aliens will not be invading american cities in the days ahead. (25) It seems likely, however, that Sky Station ships will be hovering above most major urban areas soon.

- 1 What change, if any, should be made in sentence 3?
 - A Change isn't to wasn't
 - B Change *nearly* to **near**
 - C* Change *improbible* to improbable
 - **D** Make no change

Objective 6

- What change, if any, should be made in sentence 5?
 - A* Change it's to its
 - B Delete the comma after way
 - C Change *metropolitan* to Metropolitan
 - **D** Make no change

Objective 6

- 3 What change should be made in sentence 9?
 - **A*** Change *inflating* to **inflated**
 - B Delete the comma after ground
 - C Change will be guided to was guided
 - D Change altitude to altatude

Objective 6

- What is the most effective way to rewrite the ideas in sentences 11 and 12?
 - A Although state-of-the-art materials make the possibility of rupture almost nonexistent; an onboard monitoring system will be able to immediately detect any loss of buoyancy.
 - **B*** Although state-of-the-art materials make the possibility of rupture almost nonexistent, an onboard monitoring system will be able to immediately detect any loss of buoyancy.
 - C State-of-the-art materials make the possibility of rupture almost nonexistent, an onboard monitoring system will be able to immediately detect any loss of buoyancy, though.
 - **D** State-of-the-art materials, which make the possibility of rupture almost nonexistent, and an onboard monitoring system, which will be able to immediately detect any loss of buoyancy.

Objective 6

When students are asked to combine two sentences, they should keep in mind that the right answer must be a grammatically correct sentence, must be the most effective sentence (not wordy or awkward), and must not change the original meaning.

- 5 What is the most effective way to improve the organization of the third paragraph (sentences 15–18)?
 - **A** Move sentence 17 to the end of the paragraph
 - **B*** Delete sentence 17
 - C Delete sentence 18
 - **D** Move sentence 18 to the beginning of the paragraph

Objective 6

In items of this type, students may be asked to delete a sentence or to rearrange sentences within a paragraph in order to achieve more effective organization of ideas.

- 6 The meaning of sentence 20 can be clarified by changing *they* to
 - A it
 - **B** the developers
 - C* these transmissions
 - **D** blimps

Objective 6

This item asks students to replace an ambiguous pronoun (a pronoun whose antecedent is not clear) with a specific noun that will clarify the meaning of the sentence.

- 7 What change, if any, should be made in sentence 21?
 - A Change closer to closest
 - **B*** Change *it* to **they**
 - C Insert a comma after power
 - D Make no change

Objective 6

- **8** What change, if any, should be made in sentence 22?
 - A* Insert a comma after them
 - B Delete and
 - C Change *necessary* to neccessary
 - D Make no change

Objective 6

- **9** Which transition should be added to the beginning of sentence 23?
 - A* Consequently,
 - **B** Besides,
 - C Nevertheless,
 - D First,

This item asks students to recognize how an effective transition can improve the progression of ideas from sentence to sentence. Students must choose the transition word or phrase that makes the best sense in the context of the paragraph as a whole.

- 10 What change, if any, should be made in sentence 24?
 - A Change will not be invading to aren't invading
 - **B*** Change *american* to **American**
 - C Change *days* to day's
 - D Make no change

Objective 6